

GUIDANCE AND ETIQUETTE FOR MATCHES

(Information from the League)

HOME TEAMS: please offer a drink to visiting teams even if fixtures are not being played at the main Club venue.

VISITING TEAMS: are expected to respect the clothing and footwear codes of the home Clubs. Clubs no longer insist on all-white tops and shorts/skirts but clothing and footwear appropriate for tennis is expected: so, no football strips or cut-off shorts or shoes which are likely to mark or damage court surfaces, please.

MOBILE PHONES: should be switched off or silenced before players go on court.

e-SCORECARDS: should be submitted promptly and no later than 48 hours of completion of a match, so that results and league tables can be kept up to date on the website and that Clubs avoid penalties for late submission.

THE WEATHER: this is beyond the control of the Association and so are decisions as to when it is fit to play; if no play takes place or remains unfinished owing to bad weather, then completion of the match should occur in accordance with Rule B10.

The Association's view is that 'bad weather' is something that can only be judged locally on the evening and at the playing venue concerned and that it is difficult to specify unambiguously in writing within a Rule. The Association's advice to players is that they do not play if, after assessing the conditions (including during the knock-up before a match is due to commence), they consider there to be a risk of personal injury through playing.

Safety is a matter for the individual clubs making up the Association: it is the clubs which are members of the LTA/hold public indemnity insurance/are Club Marked with all that this entails in setting and maintaining standards for the Clubs.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Following a couple of incidents that have been reported to the Committee, could we remind ALL players about their responsibility to behave in a responsible and sporting manner during matches. The shouting of expletives, throwing of racquets, any form of threatening behaviour and the constant querying of line calls is not acceptable behaviour. Care should be taken to respect opponents and to ensure safe play at all times during matches; no shot should be aimed at an opposition player intentionally.

LINE CALLS:

Line calls are the most common cause of conflict, and it should always be remembered that line calls are made in good faith, often while trying to play a shot with little time to reconsider. Even first line professionals get it wrong. We all look to tennis as a relaxation and while mistakes will occur, we would not want those mistakes to spoil our enjoyment of the evening or of that of neighbouring matches.

So, the following proposal regarding line calls was adopted at the AGM in 2014 and should be observed during matches:

- that the pair on whose side of the net the ball bounces have the final say about the line call
- that the pair affected by such a call may ask, politely, once, whether there was any doubt about the call
- that the original callers may then, with or without consultation between them
- change the call (perhaps because on closer inspection a mark is seen)
- suggest that the point is replayed (starting with 2 services)
- stick to the original call (perhaps because on closer inspection a mark is seen)
- seek the view of the affected pair without having to be bound by their opinion
- that the pair affected by the call then accept the decision, graciously, whatever it may be.
- Under no circumstances should the affected pair gang up on, or in any way bully, one or other or both of the callers, by swearing or using intimidating or demeaning language.

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